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# JEWES AND JUDAISM

IN THE  
NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY  
GUSTAV KARPELES

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN



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## PREFATORY NOTE

The following lectures, translated from the German, were delivered by Doctor Gustav Karpeles, during the winter of 1899-1900, before the "Association for Jewish History and Literature" (*Verein für jüdische Geschichte und Litteratur*) at Berlin. The translation is done from the author's unpublished manuscript.

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# JEWS AND JUDAISM IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

## I

We are standing on the border line between two centuries, a solemn moment which it behooves us to use for a review of the past and a survey of the future. To review the past will naturally be more profitable than to survey the future. A retrospect can yield instruction, but our view of the future is obscured by enveloping fog and heavy clouds. Sentimental reflections, however, avail naught. A long history overflowing with pain has taught the Jew the truth of what the Preacher uttered from out of the fulness of his experience: "The generations come, and the generations go, the earth stands forever." Nearly the same thought is expressed by one of the archangels in the Prologue to *Faust*, in his greeting to the dawn of a new day of eternity:

"The sun-orb sings, in emulation,  
'Mid brother-spheres, his ancient round:  
His path predestined through Creation  
He ends with step of thunder-sound."

Eternity has neither days, nor years, nor æons, but man in his finitude must needs tell off a begin-

ning and an end on the circle of everlasting life and death, and his divisions testify, not to his finitude alone, but also to his arbitrariness.

And yet few will agree with the learned German professor who calls it the *naïveté* of a child or of a barbarian that makes us see something peculiarly demoniac in the day designated by human device as the beginning of a century. Century festivals go back to remote times. The ancients celebrated them with full consciousness of the serious demands of their day and of the problems awaiting solution. As the Hellenes of days long gone by derived fresh courage for their combats from their civic celebrations, so we moderns ought to emerge from the close of a circumscribed, well-defined epoch in our development fortified and reinvigorated for the work with which the future is surcharged. From this point of view an historical retrospect has practical value and ethical significance.

What has the century just closed given to modern Judaism? When we settle up our account with the century, what is the balance to our credit? These are the questions that require an answer.

It may safely be assumed that none is inclined to dispute the statement that the nineteenth century was one of the most momentous in the history of Judaism. Perhaps no one century since that of the destruction of the Temple and the birth of Jesus has equalled it in importance. Or, not to go back to so remote a period, can it be gainsaid that since the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, an interval of four hundred years, the inner and outer develop-

ment of Judaism has suffered no such radical changes as in the nineteenth century?

Historians call it the age of growing self-consciousness. This description does not convey exhaustively the significance of its content. At best such historical summing up is a hazardous practice. For definite views and sure results a description of events is more to the purpose.

A careful examination of the psychic and the external material offered by the century makes it appear that seven great currents flow through its history. They succeed or overlap one another, sometimes their courses intersect, and again they flow along peacefully in parallel lines.

The first of these currents prevailed in the time of ferment and combat, when apostasy and baptism were the order of the day. The second is denominated the science of Judaism. The third is the struggle for political emancipation. The fourth is marked by religious reform conflicts, the fifth by assimilative tendencies, the sixth by anti-Semitism, and the seventh by the rise and concentration of "Young Israel." For the sake of those who insist upon time limits it may be said that the first two currents characterize the first quarter of the century; the next two, the middle of the century, and the last three, the closing quarter. But it cannot be repeated too often that all such summaries and divisions are full of pitfalls, against which the student must be on his guard. For our purpose it is more profitable to pass the important events in review, and trace the course of each stream from its source to its mouth.

The first point that demands consideration is the appearance of Judaism at the opening of the nineteenth century. The mass of the Jews lived an unthinking routine life. Of the transformation about to take place, they had scarce a suspicion. The religious attitude was on the whole what it had been three or four hundred years earlier. Religious customs were rigidly observed, in the synagogue and in the home alike. Of spiritualization, of an inner exalted feeling, there was not a trace. No one had heard of the ethical mission of Judaism. Political oppression was but little less galling than before; in the countries of the East, indeed, it weighed even more heavily upon the Jews than formerly. Yet a breath of the new time had stolen its way into the narrow Jew streets. The young people were familiarizing themselves with secular culture, and they were beginning to nurse religious doubts.

The rapid progress of the Jew in modern living is astounding. Scarcely ten years after the death of Moses Mendelssohn there were Jewish circles in Berlin, Breslau, and Königsberg, even in Vienna and in Paris, in which the new attitude toward the problems of life had completely established itself. From the Jewish *salons* in Berlin and Vienna a generation fared forth which had armed itself for war against the old order. The Jewish women pointed the way, the full-grown men were not yet able to follow them, the only ones that kept pace with them were the young enthusiasts who had greedily drunk in Lessing's *Nathan* and the ideas of Voltaire and Rousseau.



Affairs in Berlin were typical of the Jewish conditions of the day. The Prussian capital was the centre of Jewish life, the meeting place of the West and the East, of the Slavic element with the Teutonic element. These two elements were still mutually exclusive, instead of complementary, as they are in reality, seeing that the one exercises conservative force within modern Judaism, and the other creative force. Put the two names Hirschel Lewin and Rahel Levin next to each other, and the whole abyss yawning between the old and the new is uncovered. Hirschel Lewin, the chief rabbi of the Berlin community at the beginning of the century, is the representative of the old; Rahel Levin, the wife of Varnhagen von Ense, is the typical representative of the new. These two did not speak the same language. From Rahel's *salon*, in which noted diplomats, princes of the intellect, members of the royal family, poets, and warriors, moved on a footing of intimacy, no bridge led to the Synagogue of the Heidereutergasse, where the services were conducted entirely in Hebrew, with as strict regard to tradition as in the remotest corners of Russia or Galicia. Compromise was out of the question, an agreement not to be thought of, a separation inevitable.

An attempt to signalize the inner division by an outer, visible act had been made by a disciple of Moses Mendelssohn. The well-known David Friedländer has frequently been held up to reprobation for his letter to the Provost Teller (1799), in which he announced his determination and that of his followers to accept Christianity, provided the Church

would exempt them from subscribing to her historical doctrines. They were prepared to accept the Christian doctrines of the reason, but they could never go the length of the dogma of a Son of God. On the other hand, they held in common with Christians the belief in the unity of God, the incorporeality and immortality of the soul, and the destiny of man to aspire to perfection and happiness. The reader of history knows with what scorn the petitioners were repulsed.

In their despondency at the rebuff no alternative presented itself but the extreme measure of accepting Christianity in the gross, historical truths and all the rest. Friedländer and his *confrères*, indeed, did not arrive at this logically correct conclusion, but their children and grandchildren did. A veritable mania for baptism began to manifest itself. It possessed not only the ladies of the *salons*, but also the less aristocratic circles, the circles of the clerks and servant-maids. In the first quarter of the century a large part of the Jewish community of Berlin, in the opinion of some authorities fully half its members, were converted to Christianity. The same happened in Königsberg, Frankfort, Breslau, and other large cities.

With baptism immorality increased. The Jews but followed the example set them by their non-Jewish environment. "Vices prevailed among us," is the text of one lamentation, "which our fathers had not known, and which were purchased dearly at any price. Irreligiousness, debauchery, and effeminacy, the weeds that sprout up out of the abuse

of enlightenment and culture, have, alas, taken root among us. Especially in the capital cities we are exposed to the peril of having the austerity and simplicity of our morals swept away by the stream of luxury." Of the converts the same author says, that "they resembled the moth fluttering about the flame until it is finally consumed." But a contemporary of this writer consoles himself with the reflection that the converts "are but chips shaved off from an unwieldy colossus; the colossus is only strengthened by their removal." Time has proved him right.

This "Berlin religion" naturally became the horror of the pious, who, bearing its excesses in mind, were all the more solicitous to keep themselves aloof from modern educational movements. So it was in Berlin, so in Vienna, so also in Paris where, by the doctrine of the "rights of man," Jews were transformed in the twinkling of an eye into full-fledged citizens. In France, accordingly, the gap between the civil and the social position of the Jews was not so great as in Germany. By convening a Jewish Assembly of Notables and, following close upon it, a Synhedrion to exercise jurisdiction as the supreme ecclesiastic authority over the Jews of France and her dependencies, Napoleon created new institutions in Judaism, and at first sight it seemed great and important institutions for the Jews. In a decree dated May 30, 1806, the Emperor ordered that, in the month of July of the same year, a conference of "the most prominent among the Jews be convened." To this body the Emperor communicated his wishes.

Its other function was to formulate, for the Imperial representatives, a plan considered effective "in stimulating the Jews of the Empire to take up the practice of arts and crafts, in order that they might learn to substitute dignified callings for the disgraceful occupations to which for generations and centuries they had largely devoted themselves." The enthusiasm with which the Jews greeted this decree can hardly be imagined. Little lacked and they had journeyed from the various countries of Europe to Paris to pay homage to the Emperor as a new Messiah.

On July 26, 1806,—it was a Saturday,—the hundred Notables who had been summoned assembled in the *Hôtel de Ville*. Some came on foot, and their ballots had been filled out before the Sabbath; others came in carriages, and ostentatiously wrote out their ballots at the meeting. So the crass opposition between the representatives of the old and the representatives of the new within Judaism stood revealed from the first.

The Emperor put twelve questions to the assemblage: Are Jews permitted to practice polygamy? Does the Jewish law permit divorce? May a Jewess marry a Christian? Are Frenchmen brethren in the eyes of the Jews, or strangers? What is the attitude of Jews toward non-Jews prescribed by the Jewish religion? Do the Jews born there consider that they owe allegiance to France? Who appoints the Rabbis? What jurisdiction do the Rabbis exercise over Jews? Is the authority of the Rabbis regulated by written laws or by tradition? Are certain vocations

forbidden to Jews by their religion? Does the Jewish law prohibit usury in dealings with Jews, and enjoin it in dealings with non-Jews?

The Notables had no difficulty in answering these questions satisfactorily. They went so far as to declare mixed marriages as permitted. When the sixth question was read, inquiring into the patriotic sentiments of Jews, and whether they considered themselves called upon to defend France in the hour of her peril, the whole assembly to a man sprang to its feet, and cried out with enthusiasm: "Unto death!"

Napoleon was pleased. In order to have the resolutions passed by the Notables ratified and invested with binding power, he summoned a meeting of forty-six Rabbis and twenty-five laymen at Paris. The assembly was to bear the name and play the part of the Great Synhedrion.

This imposing gathering met for the first time on February 9, 1807. On the whole it confirmed the resolutions of the Notables, only the mixed marriages clause failed to receive unqualified assent. The Synhedrion maintained that from the point of view of Judaism such marriages could not be considered valid. But the right of Rabbis to persecute the parties to a mixed marriage was denied; especially, the ban of excommunication could not be pronounced against them. The sessions of the Synhedrion lasted a whole month. Examined to-day, a century later, in the light of history, the resolutions of this Synhedrion and its whole activity reveal nothing of supreme importance or authoritativeness in the development of Jews and Judaism, unless an

exception be made in favor of the one point, that it was the first occasion on which Rabbinical authorities enunciated a distinction between the unchangeable character of the moral law given at Sinai and the changeable law applicable only to definite times and conditions.

This differentiation involved several fundamental fallacies, which were to bring forth troublesome consequences. The principle laying down the right of a given generation to inaugurate a spiritual reform had been connected by the Synhedrion with an external purpose, with civil emancipation. This was a concession fraught with serious possibilities. A second mistake was even more dangerous. The Synhedrion had given color to the notion that the law could be abrogated by some human authority, which thus could exercise binding and absolving power over the adherents of Judaism.

The whole episode was practically without effect upon the modern development of Judaism. In France itself it left a trace in the institution of the consistories, which with some modifications remain in force to the present day. After a century's trial it may be said that the institution has not redounded to the good of Judaism in France. To the observer it is apparent that ecclesiastical government by consistory is "not a factor encouraging the development of an independent religious life growing out of the religious consciousness of the community."

Salvation had to be looked for from other quarters.

A heavy crisis impended over Judaism. Not as



development takes place in nature, slowly, steadily, in imperceptible gradations, but by leaps and bounds, in wild haste, the spirit released from the shackles of the middle ages rushed into the new paths leading to extreme changes. There had been timid reforms by sober architects like Israel Jacobson and his associates. They had ventured so far as to introduce organs into the synagogues, and German prayers, in the effort to repair the roof, though the very pillars of the house were tottering. The younger generation in its zeal outstripped them by far. The more sensible of them admitted that a perilous abyss was yawning between the young people and the traditions of their forebears. It could not be bridged over. The state of the case was simple: the old was defended by the Old Guard—the guard that may die but never surrenders—and even the new was no longer new enough for the new generation.

The reform of the synagogue ritual introduced between 1815 and 1819 in Cassel, Hamburg, and Berlin, was imitated in other urban centres. This reform was at best but a timid attempt to reach out for the better, for knowledge, for a return to the essence of what had been abandoned. What it lacked was a most important element. It had no solid historical basis, no scientific foundation. Other efforts to raise Judaism and reinstate it in the esteem of its adherents likewise bore no result. Two periodical publications in German and one in English were known only to small circles of Jews. They were patterned after the "moral weeklies." All the literature produced by the school of Mendelssohn con-

sisted of *belles-lettres* and of articles advocating emancipation and defending the Jews against their steadily increasing enemies. The value of these productions was inconsiderable, and even in the combat itself they cut no figure. Only the preachers who with their modern education and their oratorical ability entered the lists as the champions of Judaism, only they succeeded in awakening religious sentiment in the educated classes, who had felt disgraced by their religion and their co-religionists.

From self-respect to self-liberation was an easy step, and it was made easier by the events of the day. Aspiring minds conceived the idea of achieving the culture of the Jew through what was peculiarly his own. On November 17, 1819, three young enthusiasts in Berlin formed the "Society for the Culture and the Science of the Jews." The purpose of the society was nothing less than to "connect the Jews with the age and the countries in which they live, by means of a course of education which shall proceed from within outward." The founders were three young men, Edward Gans, a jurist, Moses Moser, a merchant with philosophic culture, and Leopold Zunz, a Jewish scholar. They were joined by many men of education throughout Germany. The first achievement of the young society was the "Journal for the Science of Judaism" (1822), under the supervision of Zunz. In the very first issue there appeared an essay clearly defining the concept "Science of Judaism." The object of this science was stated to be "the presentation of Judaism first from the historical point of view, its gradual development and

growth, and then from the philosophic point of view, its essential meaning and thought; but before all a knowledge of Jewish literature must be arrived at through philological channels."

Here was a something new and great, a something hitherto unknown, this "science of Judaism." The extravagant notions of culture harbored by "Young Palestine," were, of course, only castles in the air. The society and the journal perished after a short existence, but germs had been scattered which were destined to develop. Contrary to rule and custom the captain had been the first to desert the sinking ship and seek safety in port. For a time the situation seemed gloomier than ever before. In those days one of the three founders wrote memorable words to a despairing friend: "The only imperishable possession that emerges from this deluge is the science of Judaism, for this science lives though no finger has stirred in its service for centuries. I confess that, barring submission to the judgment of God, the cultivation of this science is my consolation and my refuge. Upon myself the storms and experiences I have undergone shall not exercise an influence likely to drive me into dissension with myself. I did what I considered it my duty to do. Seeing that I was preaching in the wilderness, I ceased to preach, but not to become faithless to what I proclaimed. . . . Nothing is left for the members to do but continue, faithful to their ideals, to influence those who come in contact with them, and commit the rest to God."

It was Leopold Zunz (1794-1886) who wrote

these remarkable words. Not only was he the founder of the science of Judaism, he remained its chief exponent even after the task marked out by him had enlisted friends and capable promoters. "A man of speech and of action, he created and wrought, while others dreamed and lost courage." In those gloomy days of the deluge, Zunz withdrew to his quiet, world-removed ark, and created a work, "The Devotional Homilies of the Jews" (*Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden*), that laid the foundations of the science of Judaism. His aim was to show that the living word of instruction had at all times been heard in Israel. His clear, comprehensive, systematizing mind introduced light and order into the jungle of the Haggada. His work is a veritable classic. Down to our own day its authority continues undisputed. In three later works he sought to trace the fortunes of Israel's devotional literature, from its birth thousands of years ago, through the mazes of Jewish liturgical poetry. Zunz was the first to survey the whole field of Jewish literature, and lay down the lines of demarcation indicating its development. He assembled its isolated, disjointed investigations and works, constituting them a science that compelled the respect of scholars in kindred departments. He is the creator of a scientific style in Jewish literature. Thus a movement radiated from him which brought about, in Jews and in non-Jews, a total change of front with regard to Judaism. He taught his co-religionists self-knowledge and led them to self-respect.

Our admiration for his achievement suffers no

diminution though it be admitted that almost at the same time and independently of Zunz others were doing the same pioneer work. Zunz was joined in his endeavors by one born in a country in which the study of the Talmud had taken refuge from the storms of the modern era. This was Solomon Judah Rapoport (1790-1867), of Lemberg. He belonged to a circle of Galician humanists whose spiritual leader was Nachman Krochmal (1785-1840), one of the most profound thinkers among Jews. Rapoport was the first to show how a rich store of Talmudic scholarship can be applied to the tasks and purposes of Jewish science. The great influence which he exercised upon the development of Jewish science until the end of his life lay in the felicitous union in his mind of Talmudic with secular knowledge, of the power of acute combinations with the power of historical criticism.

By a fortunate coincidence the time in which the interest of the general public in Judaism seemed to have died out produced even a third investigator, who aided Zunz and Rapoport in their task of leveling new paths. He hailed from Italy, the land in which the traditions of a classic past continued to be silently operative, and from a family to which Jewish literature had been indebted, long and frequently, for poets and thinkers. Samuel David Luzzatto (1800-1865), of Trieste, devoted himself primarily to Bible exegesis and the history of literature. His spirit was related to the free spirit of the Italian scholars of the Renaissance. At once liberal and religious, he possessed, besides, a rare faculty of

keen-witted discernment. In every department of Jewish science his activities had a stimulating effect: in Bible exegesis, in Jewish history, in the history of Jewish literature, and in Hebrew grammar. In the last he did pioneer work in putting it on a scientific basis.

A trio of investigators like Zunz, Rapoport, and Luzzatto, were well able to rekindle the dying embers of love for Judaism in the hearts of its adherents, and clear the encumbered paths for disciples and successors. From the appearance of these scholars in the arena dates a renaissance of the science of Judaism, which continues to this day to produce results and present new aims. Scores of zealous and competent workers have contributed their solutions of the problems it propounds, and their achievements go to swell the stream of general culture. It is as the German poet says: "Far off in the East the dawn is breaking, the olden times are growing young!" The rise of the science of Judaism marked the end of the time in which the young found salvation only in one-sided negation, or sought salvation only beyond the limits of their religious community, in regions in which the Jew was ashamed to be a Jew, was ashamed to call himself a Jew.



## II

The course taken by self-knowledge and self-respect in Judaism was by no means short or rapid, though such may have been the impression obtained from what I said in the previous section. It was a long time before the realization of a change in life and morals penetrated the consciousness of the Jews, or before they entered freely and without restriction into the movements contemporaneous with them. The history of this development is properly classed as part of general history or of the history of those conflicts between progress and reaction, between revolution and counter-revolution, which took place from 1815 on in every civilized country, in all fields of public and political life. At the same time, the history of this current of events naturally forms part of Jewish history as well.

The subject has two aspects, one of which is the self-emancipation of the Jews, the other is their emancipation as dwellers among other nations. Of our self-emancipation we may assert with just pride that it was accomplished long before the other emancipation was even thought of; while the political and legal enfranchisement of the Jew had a history of quite other character.

An historian of keen insight justly called it that emancipation by which the states and peoples freed

*themselves* from the errors and prejudices of *their* past, in the same way as the Jews had already emancipated themselves in all fields of thought. How they came to have a wider, freer life among the peoples of the civilized world is only an incident in the general progress of humane feelings and in the development of a sense of justice among the nations of the present day.

It would be interesting to follow the very slow evolution of this sense of justice. It is difficult to realize how ideas so fundamental could take root and sprout so slowly in the countries of highest culture, though in some lands, notably America, they conquered public opinion at one blow. Various causes contributed to the fact—the narrow-mindedness of the learned, factiousness, the inflexibility of public opinion, blind adherence to principles, political orthodoxy, and much else. Science—including, it must be stated, theology as well as history—politics, and the press, were equally powerful factors in retarding the progress of liberalism. Such is the only explanation that throws light upon the determined stand taken against the emancipation of the Jews in the period between 1815 and 1840 by the most learned historians and the most open-minded politicians. They tried to demonstrate by historic precedent that emancipation was not necessary for the Jews, and that their enfranchisement would be most dangerous and fraught with ruin to the Christians. The leader of the South German liberals, Karl von Rotteck, came out quite openly against the emancipation of the Jews so late as 1831-1832, dur-

ing the session of the Chamber of Baden. Hot opponents were found also in the world of *belles-lettres*, and counted among their number men like Gustav Pfitzer and Wolfgang Menzel. Even liberals, such as the author Karl Gutzkow, entertained many doubts concerning the Jews, from which they could not free themselves. And if the intelligent and the learned were so narrow and one-sided in regard to this question, what was to be expected of the people at large? With such an example furnished by men such as these, what must public opinion have been? If the salt of the earth have lost its savor, with what were things to be salted? Lessing's ideas found many friends, it is true, but few believers. People were not ashamed to justify their opposition to the emancipation of the Jews from a juridical and rational standpoint. The birthright to religious freedom, which was the first aspect of the movement to come into consideration, was brought to the fore by only a few; and again and again it became necessary to remind the Jews themselves of the rights due them and the justice of their demands.

To prepare the way for the emancipation of the Jews was most difficult in the very states which first granted full religious liberty, and adopted an attitude of complete tolerance in religious matters. A notable example is Prussia. As is known, Frederick the Great on his assumption of the government addressed a rescript to the Minister of State Von Brandt. It was a model document—in all but spelling—proclaiming that all religions were to be tolerated, and the state should see to the one thing only,

that no one work harm to his neighbor; "for here each must be happy after his own fashion." And so the Prussian common law guaranteed every inhabitant of the state complete freedom in matters of conscience and religion. Nevertheless, up to 1847 the provisions of the law left much to be desired in regard to the emancipation of the Jews.

Even during the debates that were carried on in St. Paul's Church in Frankfort concerning the fundamental rights of the German people, voices were raised against the enfranchisement of the Jews. A well-known liberal deputy brought up the question as to what vote the Jew would cast, if the unity of the German states should come up for consideration. A Jewish deputy, indignant, gave the eloquent answer: "He will cast a vote determined by the deepest conviction, by the knowledge, won at hard cost, of all the vulgarities, all the petty misdeeds, which are fostered by the political disruption of Germany, by the pitiful, narrow-minded, mean-spirited acts of a contracted little state. No one in Germany has experienced this with such force, so vividly, as we have; no one has such daily insight into all these matters as we have. If you offer me, on the one hand, emancipation for the Jews,—and my dearest wishes are directed toward their emancipation,—on the other hand, the realization of a beautiful dream, the political unity of Germany, and, involved therein, its political freedom—given this choice, I would take the second offer without hesitation; for I am of the firm conviction that the second carries the first offer in its train.

“Is the German as an individual, in his private life, less benevolent, less unselfish, less proud of his country than the Frenchman? No German, however unprejudiced, would be willing to admit that this is true. Then, why is it that when the question of emancipation as well as other questions concerning monopoly and equality before the law are discussed here in Germany, why is it that low considerations arise, of self-seeking, of malevolence, of the mean-spirited desire to clog the powers of others? No trace of such a spirit manifests itself in France, where the problem of emancipation was solved with the rapidity of thought, with the resoluteness of conviction. And in England, too, such a spirit is foreign to all discussions. One must not draw the inference that in these countries pettiness is less characteristic of the individual than in Germany. The nature of man does not vary to such an extent. But in France and England, public and political life, the legislative element, is too dignified, too exalted, has too high a standpoint, not to banish the merely personal, petty, and low from its consideration, or, at least, impose silence upon the importunities of the mean-spirited. The very passions given play, fostered, in fact, by political life of such kind are of a nobler and more magnanimous character. They spring from power conscious of itself and seeking to defend itself, while the passions excited in small states arise from a feeling of impotence. Here they are more unyielding, even if not more dangerous, than where the stage is broader; for they never exhaust themselves, but grow in size as public power

wanes. Vulgarity is the mother earth from which these passions trodden to the ground draw fresh and unconquerable strength. Contrast with this the wealth of intelligence from which choice can be made in a great nation constituting a living political entity, when the time comes to elect representatives and make laws; contrast with it the elevated spirit, the fine culture, presented by a people rich in endowments of mind and soul, and standing on the highest rung of political life. How different the question of justice and freedom in this state of affairs from the aspect it wears in the narrow confines of a petty state, where prosperous mediocrity and narrow-minded conceit often wield the sceptre. Let us fight out the issue of emancipation in an assembly which represents thirty million Germans, and I'll pledge my life that emancipation will triumph."

The man who spoke in this wise was the leader of the German Jews in their struggle for freedom. Next to the Jewish scholars, who gave their co-religionists insight into the essence and fundamental doctrines of Judaism, as well as into its historical development, he was the most powerful agent in arousing the sentiment of self-respect among the German Jews. He was the bravest champion of their civic rights. Gabriel Riesser (1806-1860), who first restored the name of Jew to honor, was at once a German and a Jew, at once an enthusiastic patriot of the fatherland and an energetic defender of his race. He refused to sacrifice one jot or tittle of his religion for the sake of political liberty, nevertheless he demanded unrestricted freedom for all professing



the Jewish religion. His word and example electrified the youth in Jewry. His contemporaries came to look upon equality before the law, not as a gift to be obtained by begging, but as a right to be demanded. Unlike David Friedländer and his companions, however, they did not offer by way of requital to perform acts that would involve harm to their Judaism. This, it must be admitted, was a long step forward, and we are indebted for it chiefly to Gabriel Riesser, who all his life, by the spoken and the written word, took the part of the Jews, and defended their rights against every attack. Next to the classic works of Ludwig Börne, Riesser's writings rank as the most important contributions to the large literature of the emancipation question. They are distinguished for enthusiasm in the cause of the Jews, for patriotic sentiment, and, by no means least, for force and absolute truthfulness.

The idea of emancipation, it is true, did not originate in Germany, but in England. A century and a half before, John Toland, the spokesman of English deism, had proclaimed the right of the Jews to equality before the law. Other freethinkers followed him in England and France—in France after the new spiritual movement had been transplanted thither. In Germany it was poets like Lessing and Herder, philosophers like Wolff, Thomasius, and Baumgarten, who took up the cudgels against the old superstitions in the name of pure reason. All of them, directly or indirectly, furthered the growth of the new ideas, and cleared the ground for the recognition of the rights of man.

Certain external events contributed to give these ideas form and life. In 1781 Emperor Joseph II issued his famous edict for Austria; the independence won by the United States in 1783 guaranteed religious freedom to all comers; in 1791 the complete equality of the Jews with the other citizens was declared in France; and in 1796, together with the entry of the victorious French troops, emancipation was introduced into Holland. The Italian states and England soon followed. In Russia and Poland emancipation was not yet to be dreamed of. Thus, only Germany remained; and here, under unfavorable external conditions, self-emancipation among the Jews preceded their political emancipation by many years. Although they fought bravely in the War of Liberation, the famous Edict of Hardenberg (1812), which granted citizenship to all Jews of Prussia, was never put into effect. From 1815 to 1850 they had to undergo many severe conflicts, not only with the German chauvinists, but with the reactionaries as well.

In all these struggles Gabriel Riesser was the man to fire his co-religionists with courage, and to convince the just-minded German that emancipation was a moral duty. The details of the struggle constitute a melancholy chapter in modern history. While in the early "thirties" the city of London elected Lionel Rothschild as its representative in the House of Commons, the Jews in various German states were still passing through severe conflicts in order to gain the most elementary rights.

The best characterization of the position of the

Jews in West European countries is afforded by the Damascus affair (1840), which unfortunately came to be of great significance in the century. In the winter of 1840 the superior of a Capuchin monastery and his servant disappeared from Damascus. The crime was laid at the door of the Jews, not through the agency of natives, but through the French Consul at Damascus. As the murder took place before the Passover, the rumor spread without opposition. Prominent Jews were imprisoned and tortured; the Jewish quarter was plundered. As a result of the confessions wrung from victims on the rack, the unfortunate Jews were condemned to death on the charge of ritual murder.

One can easily conceive that this event produced a sensation in Europe. England and Austria came out against France, whose leading statesman, Thiers, was ogling the Jesuits in order to strengthen his country in the Orient. But the spirit of self-consciousness and self-respect had been awakened in the European Jews. They came to the defense with no faltering step. At their head were Adolphe Crémieux (1796-1880) and Moses Montefiore (1784-1885), for whom the Jews will cherish abiding gratitude. Crémieux and Montefiore undertook the journey to Egypt, and succeeded in convincing Mehmet Ali of the innocence of the Jews, and in prevailing upon him to set them free. The passage of these two men through Europe was nothing short of a triumphal procession.

The Damascus event itself fell into oblivion, but, as the end of the century has shown, and to the hor-

ror of all friends of culture and progress, the superstition came to life again in various European countries, in the very centre of European culture, and brought confusion and evil upon wide circles of society. One good, however, has been the result. The Jews became fully convinced of the need for self-defense, and this conviction led, twenty years later, to the foundation of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle*, which has for its object the assistance of Jews wherever they suffer because they are Jews. In connection with the *Alliance Israélite Universelle*, similar societies were later formed in London, New York, and Vienna. These institutions had the effect of strengthening the feeling of solidarity among modern Jews, which is in itself a noble feeling of brotherly community in joy and sorrow, and is not to be confounded with the sentiment imputed to the Jews by their opponents, that the Jews hold themselves liable for all errors and mistakes committed by their co-religionists.

The storms of the year 1848 brought help to the German patriots struggling for liberty, and thus to the Jews as well. In France, Germany, Austria, and Italy the people rose in a body to demand their rights, and in all these struggles Jews took sides with the fighters for liberty. Soon after, however, a political reaction set in which nullified to a great extent the successes of the liberals in the year 1848. It was only after much parleying and wavering that the Prussian constitution adopted in 1850 finally declared civic rights to be independent of creed in Prussia. Some of the German states had already

accepted this principle, others shortly followed the lead of Prussia. Nevertheless, not until the adoption of the German constitution of 1871 was complete equality granted to the Jews throughout Germany. Austria had preceded Germany by twelve years in taking this step.

Complete emancipation was much more easily obtained in America. The liberation of the Colonies from the yoke of England brought freedom to the Jews. Even before the seventeenth century Jews had gone with the English and Portuguese discoverers to North and South America, stimulated, in part, by the fact that America was then reputed to be the home of the Ten Tribes. In the eighteenth century the Jews took part in the Revolution of the Colonies, and in the nineteenth century their number in the United States grew from some twelve thousand to over a million. America is the great land of freedom, in which "an ideal is in itself powerful enough to triumph over arrogance and wrong-doing, without the exercise of arrogance and wrong-doing."

No less powerful than the struggle for freedom was a second movement, which took its course through the middle of the century alongside the purely scientific movement and the fight for civic equality. This was the conflict carried on between the advocates of reform and of traditional Judaism, the smoldering fires of which leapt into flames in the "forties." The opposition between the two parties may rightly be taken as a sign of renewed religious self-consciousness.



Now the representatives of traditional Judaism also stepped forth from their retirement, and took their place on the field of battle, like their opponents clad in the armor of modern culture. They arrogated to themselves the distinction of absolute correctness in matters of religious belief. They have since borne the name of "Orthodox" (really neo-Orthodox) in opposition to the Reform party. The most eminent representatives of these two tendencies were Abraham Geiger (1810-1874) and Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888). The one embodied the principles of progress, the other, those of orthodoxy. Both were saturated with modern culture; both were penetrated by profound love for Judaism; both wanted to steer Judaism through the rough waters of the time, and give it a new and enduring form; both proceeded in their activity with intelligence, and learning, and depth of sentiment—yet the two arrived at almost antipodal goals.

Geiger's conception of Judaism was not of blind subjection to a precept, but of "a free development of inward moral strength," which rather opposes adherence to established forms. Hirsch believed the duty of the Jew to reside in unqualified submission to the law, in complete surrender of his life to religion. Yet Hirsch himself did not desire blind obedience, but thorough comprehension of the true content of the law, a divine service always practiced with complete consciousness of the meaning of the act, through which the Jew would arrive at moral perfection. Hirsch, too, wanted reform, but not a reform of Judaism; he wanted a reform of the Jews



themselves; he wanted a reformed education which would bring them back to the Torah. Geiger, on the other hand, recognized the perfect right of each generation, including the present, to carry on religious construction in its own spirit, to discard rigid forms, and continue to develop the idea of Judaism. No two differences of opinion could be more opposite in character; and yet Geiger and Hirsch belonged to the same racial and religious community; their starting-point was the same, and at bottom they sought the same ends.

If proof were necessary, the existence of these two bold minds would furnish evidence, that Judaism permits its followers full and unlimited freedom of thought, and that it is not a religion of dogmas, but of historic perception and moral sentiment. In the Talmudic academy of old the Heavenly Voice sought to reconcile absolutely opposed views by proclaiming: "These as well as those are the words of the living God." These words of comfort might be applied to the different principles which split Judaism into two parties in the last century. However dark the prospects at that time may have seemed, however violent may have been the opposition between the two antagonists, however threatening the danger to the unity of Judaism,—for the cry for division repeatedly echoed from both camps,—those whose vision penetrated deeper beneath the surface perceived scarcely any danger from these conflicts and controversies. They saw in them only signs of a newly-awakened religious life, of inner soundness, of renewed mental activity after a dreary period of

stagnation, when desertion was general, a spirit of one-sided negation prevailed, and Jews blindly imitated the stranger. The mere existence of two such men as Geiger and Hirsch had an inspiring, leavening effect. The older generation roused themselves out of their torpor, and realized that unqualified acceptance of modern culture not only does not endanger Judaism, but rather furthers its development; while the young learned to know Judaism from a point of view new to them, and began to respect and love their religion. And this was true progress, such as the timid changes advocated by the preachers in the pulpits of Reform Temples would never have produced.

Moreover, Abraham Geiger was the first to conceive a Jewish theology. His *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie* (1835) gathered all the progressive elements in Jewry about its banner, the motto of which was historic criticism. The same was done for the orthodox by Samson Raphael Hirsch. The note struck by him in his *Neunzehn Briefe über Judenthum* (1839) was loudly echoed from the camp of the pious. In order to create a new authority for the reform of Judaism, Geiger endeavored to found a Jewish theological faculty and convoke conferences of rabbis. The faculty was not established until later, and the rabbinical conventions took place at Brunswick, Frankfort-on-the-Main, and Breslau, in the years 1844, 1845, and 1846. Though rabbis and congregations were stimulated to endeavor, the institution did not last, and it failed to provide a unifying centre for the reform

activities of the rabbinate. The scientific foundations had not yet been built sufficiently sure and strong for Jewish theology to erect upon them a new structure of reform, and the congregations began only later to enter into the religious reform movement.

The movement was essentially strengthened by the Jewish press, which developed to a remarkable degree in the nineteenth century. Ludwig Philippson (1811-1889), who in his *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums* provided a vehicle for the expression of all Jewish activities, may be considered the father of Jewish journalism. Other men soon followed his example, and founded papers in London, Paris, New York, and elsewhere, all having the same end in view.

When the congregations began to participate in the reform movement, a certain opposition against even the modern rabbinate became apparent here and there. For those who were passing through a period of stress and storm the reforms of the rabbis were proceeding too slowly. They wanted a definite whole, even at the price of a schism in Judaism. In this spirit the Frankfort *Verein der Reformfreunde* was founded in the autumn of 1842. It adopted the following three principles: (1) We recognize in the Mosaic religion the potentiality of unlimited development. (2) The collection of controversies, treatises, and precepts usually called the Talmud has for us no dogmatic authority. (3) We neither await nor desire a Messiah who will lead the Israelites back to Palestine. We recognize no fatherland ex-

cept the one to which we belong by birth, or stand in the relation of citizens.

Naturally, the proclamation of these ultra-radical reform doctrines sent a thrill of excitement through the Jewry of that time. But it is clear that the statements, being entirely negative in character, contain nothing to connect the religious consciousness of the present with the Judaism of all ages. After a short period of life the *Verein der Reformfreunde* came to an end through lack of support.

The endeavors of the Berlin *Reformgemeinde* (1845), whose spiritual head was Samuel Holdheim (1806-1860), enjoyed a longer lease of life; but this association remained isolated, at least in Europe. However, a fertile field for similar endeavors offered itself in America.

It seems necessary, therefore, to consider the principles of the *Reformgemeinde* more closely. As the leaders of the movement themselves admitted, its principles were not in a line of logical development with the school of Mendelssohn or with the purely negative aims of the *Reformfreunde* in Frankfort. The first appeal of the *Gemeinde* to the Jews of Germany may be taken as the foundation of a new structure. The Berlin *Reformgemeinde* proclaimed: "We want faith; we want a positive religion; we want Judaism. We adhere to the spirit of the Bible. We recognize the Bible to be evidence of the Divine revelation by which the mind of our fathers was illuminated. We cling to everything that pertains to true worship of God in keeping with our religion. We are convinced that the Divine teaching of Juda-

ism is the eternally true one, and we believe in the promise that this knowledge of God will in time to come spread to all mankind. But we want to interpret the Holy Scriptures in its Divine meaning; we can no longer sacrifice our Divine freedom to the tyranny of the letter; we cannot truthfully pray for a Messianic kingdom on earth which will lead us, as from a strange country, out of the fatherland to which we are bound by all the ties of love, back to the land of our forefathers. We can no longer observe rules and customs which have no spiritual hold upon us, and we cannot regard as an unalterable code one that bases the essence and teaching of Judaism on unswerving adherence to forms and precepts originating in times long past and under conditions that will never reappear. Penetrated though we are by the holiness of our religion, we cannot preserve it in the form in which we have inherited it, and still less are we able to hand it on in the same form to our posterity. And so the trumpet notes of the time thrill us as we stand between the graves of our fathers and the cradles of our sons, the last to win a great inheritance in its old form, and the first who, with undaunted courage and in brotherly accord, will by word and deed lay the cornerstone of a new edifice, for ourselves and for following generations. But we do not want to tear ourselves away from the community to which we belong. Rather, we will extend the hand of love and tolerance to all our co-religionists, even to those who do not share our views. We do not want a rift in our unity. You, however, who think as we



do, of you we confidently demand union. Let us be truthful in our relations with each other, and show forbearance toward those who are not of our number, remain steadfast in our conflicts with others and loyal to ourselves."

This was a frank, honorable declaration, which should have struck an answering chord in the opposing ranks. If reform failed to win wide sympathy for this affirmation of its principles, the blame is to be put upon various factors that cannot be dealt with in detail in the present work.

Between the two extreme tendencies, between orthodoxy and reform, a mean had necessarily to be established. The further the science of Judaism and the idea of a Jewish theology were developed, the more natural it was that the desire for a middle course should have manifested itself among the Jews. A strong point in favor of the policy of compromise, which would neither entirely discard the old nor entirely repudiate the new, was that it had the prospect of becoming more powerful in Europe than either of the other courses, and gaining ground among the rabbis as well as in the congregations.

Such a policy could, of course, not be realized until the two extremes had each attained complete spiritual expression. Its basis is historic Judaism, the scientific knowledge of which it has been the most efficient agent in promoting to this day.

The exponent of this middle course was Zacharias Frankel (1801-1875). He came forward with his program at a time when the more progressive among the rabbis had put themselves into friendly



relations with the *Reformvereine* in Berlin and Frankfort-on-the-Main. In his articles and books Zacharias Frankel defended his principles with moral earnestness, disinterested piety, and, at the same time, comprehensive learning and entire freedom from extreme views and visionary enthusiasm. His manner was such as to arouse warm sympathy even among those who differed with him. A large number of cultivated rabbis and Jewish scholars who shared his views grouped themselves about Frankel. The Jewish Theological Seminary founded by him at Breslau was the first *alma mater* of Jewish learning in which the principle of historic Judaism attained full expression. The other rabbinical seminaries and high schools, at Berlin, Vienna, Paris, London, and Cincinnati, adopted this principle in slightly varying degrees.

As a matter of course, the different policies and parties had to maintain a long struggle for existence; but the details of the conflicts among reform, orthodoxy, and conservatism as yet form no part of history, since it appears impossible to fit ideas, while they are still in the rapid flux of historical development, and before their ultimate goal can be discerned, into the Procrustean bed of critical categories and scholastic concepts. Only this can be said with certainty, that all three tendencies have a definite group of adherents, that each has found representatives in the field of literature, and that each in its province has accomplished much that is important and good. It would be absurd to say that one party has been the conqueror. Such judg-

ment would be contrary to the spirit of history. To the unbiassed observer, raised above party issues, it seems like an indisputable fact that in Europe at least the party of more moderate reform has gained greatest headway. One thing cannot be denied, that three great achievements accomplished solely by this party have through it worked for the common weal of the whole body of religious Jews. The three achievements are: a well-regulated public service, sermons delivered in the language of the land, and systematic religious instruction. One cannot estimate these achievements too highly, for after a period of utter degeneration, Judaism, through them, was brought back to introspection and a self-conscious purpose.

Another result not to be despised is that the various parties exist peaceably alongside each other, and, with petty exceptions, have learned to respect each other. It is true that we have attained this end only through severe and bitter conflicts; but we have reached a point for which we should be grateful, a point from which we can look down with scorn upon a reform that has learned nothing and an orthodoxy that has forgotten nothing. To-day we want only to be Jews, honorable Jews, true to our convictions, and conscious of our history with its great, long past, yet looking freely into the needs of the present and the demands of the future. Such Jews there are in America as well as in Europe; but in Europe it was the Jews of Germany who were most deeply stirred by the spiritual conflict. Weak endeavors at reform, it is true, led to a schism in

London, but in general the reform of the ritual was effected in England, France, and even Austria with comparatively little effort. Radical reform, as I said before, found most adherents among the Jews of America, though the conservative element also counted enthusiastic representatives. Opposed to Isaac Leeser, leader of the conservatives, stood Isaac M. Wise (1819-1899), a man of uncommon energy and ability, who, together with men such as David Einhorn, Samuel Hirsch, and S. Adler, won victory for the cause of reform in the United States. The significance of the reform movement in America is that the principle has been established for the country once for all.

But raised above every individual endeavor is the great duty of bringing before our eyes more and more clearly the significance of Israel's history in the past and the present and its import for the future, its great moral lesson, and its exalted mission. We should make fast for all times the high and sacred bonds which have always joined the Jews into one religious community, and we must never voluntarily yield the consciousness that we each and all of us belong to a united Israel.

## III

The review of facts in the two previous sections leads us up to the threshold of the present, and the nearer we get to our own times the more difficult the way becomes. For there is no harder task than an objective presentation of incidents that one has lived through oneself. Nevertheless, such a presentation is an urgent necessity. In the buzz and whirr of everyday affairs, in the haste of modern existence, we seldom reach a resting-place from which we can gain an all-embracing view of actual events.

The year 1870 opened up a new era. The last third of the nineteenth century began under favorable auspices for the Jews. With slight exceptions all European legislatures were earnestly endeavoring to grant the Jews political emancipation; and even social emancipation had made great progress. The constitution of the Confederation of North German States, which was later adopted throughout the German realm, even if it did not remove every restriction put upon the Jews, set aside all laws denying them political rights. After the battle of Königgrätz, the period of liberal political views began in Austria; Hungary was granted "home rule"; in both lands the last barriers were torn down that had hemmed in emancipation; and in Italy, too, after the triumph of the Piedmontese, the Jews were

granted all civic rights. Even Russia adopted milder regulations for the Jews. In the practice of their religion and from an economic standpoint, they were allowed to develop themselves freely. In fact, during the decade from 1870 to 1880 great advances were made in the spiritual and social status of the Jews in Russia.

There is no doubt that the formation of the new German Empire established and strengthened the dominion of liberal ideas throughout Europe. "In all cultivated circles it was 'good form' to oppose religious fanaticism, to stigmatize, as mediæval, brutality, intolerance toward those who profess another belief, notably, toward a minority which in no case strives for undue power. A child of the nineteenth century should not be guilty of such intolerance, in so far as he would not set himself in opposition to the humane ideas of the time." The following incident is characteristic of the spirit which prevailed in the early years after the foundation of the German Empire. When the Evangelical Church issued an intolerant decree against apostasy to Judaism, the Jewish community protested, and, what is very much more, prominent Christian citizens of Berlin addressed a letter of appreciation to the trustees of the Jewish community thanking it for the protest, and declaring that "far from sharing or countenancing the hateful thoughts laid bare by the decree, they absolutely and entirely repudiated them."

A spirit of religious forbearance and general humanity pervaded unified Germany, in fact, the

whole of Occidental Europe; and it is readily conceivable that the Jews should have given eager expression to their gratitude in an attempt at complete assimilation. This endeavor to identify their ideals with those of the nations among whom they lived is one of the characteristic tendencies of the time. Despite exaggerations and excesses, it incontestably accomplished much that was good. A living proof is provided by those Jewish men who attained to high rank in the political, economic, and spiritual life of Germany, France, England, and America. Gustav Freytag justly designates, as one of the finest achievements that German history can record, the fact that for one hundred and fifty years the German Jews, preserving their strength as a race, have steadily raised themselves, and, with each step forward in culture and humanity, have bound themselves more closely to the German nation. "In that time they [the Jewish German and other German citizens] gradually became allies, friends, co-workers in all fields of practical and ideal life. Innumerable are the names of those Jews who deserve honor for their patriotic and their benevolent activity in their capacity of thinkers, scholars, artists, or as influential business men and simple citizens. It may be asserted with truth, that each advance made by our legislature toward the assurance of all their civic rights was also a step toward the complete incorporation of their mind and soul into German life."

Evidence of this sort from men like Freytag is certainly one of the most valuable historic documents



in favor of the assimilation of the Jews about to be consummated.

However, there was another side to the shield. In their ardor to merge themselves completely with the nation at large, many Jews went too far. Here and there, one found persons who believed that complete identification was possible only if the Jews gave up the peculiar religious character that distinguished them from others. These persons overlooked the fact that in Germany and in other countries representatives of various religions lived peaceably side by side, undisturbed by differences in religious views and customs. They forgot that nearly fifty years before a man like Gabriel Riesser had demanded emancipation without reserve, and had wanted it to be granted without reserve. He rejected with indignation the idea of buying the sacred right of freedom at the price of religion. He said: "That *we* conceive right and freedom differently, that we are striving with all our might to attain a higher liberty in a different way from the one indicated by others, and that we are determined so to strive with the last breath of our being—this it is which makes us worthy to be Germans and to be called Germans. The sonorous tones of the German language, the songs of the German poets have kindled and nourished the sacred fire of German freedom in our breasts. We *want* to belong to the German fatherland, we *will* belong to it in all respects. It *can* and *may* demand of us everything that it is justified in demanding of its citizens. We will sacrifice everything to it willingly—only *not* religion and

faith and truth and honor; for Germany's heroes and Germany's scholars have not taught us that one becomes a German through a sacrifice of this kind."

These words are different from the words of those who called for assimilation at any price, and who a generation later came with plans and propositions, the only analogy to which is found at the time of the great conflict in Palestine between Judaism and Hellenism, when the so-called "rich Jews" had no higher aim, no more ardent desire than assimilation with the Greeks. The name given the tendency at that time was *epimixein*.

Moreover, the ethnologic aspect of the question was also completely overlooked. Some great investigators maintain that the Jewish race is one of the primary divisions of the human kind, which will go on reproducing its distinctive type despite the most varied climatic influences. They say that in the course of centuries the Jewish type has remained the same. Others assert that the peculiar physiognomy of the Jews and their manner of life, instead of being a racial phenomenon, is rather the result of social compulsion, which has pressed upon them for hundreds of years. These two views can hardly be reconciled; but so much is certain, that it is scarcely possible to deny or disavow each distinctive sign of the specific Jewish type. No sort of assimilation will make the hooked nose straight, no baptismal water will smooth out the curly hair. Heinrich Brugsch, the celebrated Egyptologist, was fond of calling attention to the fact, that the Egyptian monuments discovered by him on the western side

of the mountain at Thebes, which date from the time of Moses, show the same types in the Jewish slaves and taskmasters as are found among the Jews of the present day. And Jacob Moleschott tells in his physiological notebook of the son of a baptized Jew who could not be gotten away from his mirror in the morning, because he was untiring in his efforts to change his curly hair into straight hair with his comb and other instruments.

Even intermarriage, which was urged by the assimilationists, can do little toward wiping out the differences between Jews and others. Ethnologic investigators adduce remarkable examples in proof of this fact. One of them says: "As is well known, when there is a cross between the Indo-Germanic and the Mongolian races, the Mongolian type prevails. The Russian aristocracy, in whose veins there is a slight admixture of Mongolian blood, still bears marks of the Mongolian. Among my colleagues, there is a Russian nobleman, who, like all genuine Russian *boyars*, betrays his Mongolian origin by his figure, and his Indo-Germanic origin, by his intellect. He married a Polish Jewess, and had a number of sons by her, who all have a strikingly Jewish appearance."

Thus, it is evident that Jews have not succeeded in throwing off their earmarks by means of baptism, or even baptism by immersion, as it were, in the ocean of races that surrounds them. For the Jewish type is indestructible, and the Jews may boast of their noble physiognomy, full of character, which hardly differs from that of the ancient Greeks. In

fact, the Jewish face surpasses the Greek in its expressiveness and in moral earnestness. To the unprejudiced observer it will remain as a distinct impress of the most ancient aristocracy among the peoples of the earth.

The over-zealous assimilationists have disregarded this point; and I recall exactly how one of their leaders in a public address told his auditors, who were in an attitude of undivided attention, that we must liken ourselves to our non-Jewish co-citizens in *all* externals, even in our walk and our gestures. He overlooked the fact that all trees do not bear the same bark, and ethnologic differences that have maintained themselves for thousands of years cannot all of a sudden be decreed out of existence.

This very excess of zeal in time necessarily called forth a violent reaction. The same people who had advised complete assimilation for the Jews suddenly felt that their endeavors for it were arrogant and to be deprecated, that they were an intrusion into the sphere of national affairs, and the like. The prevalence of humane ideas had been merely a brilliant episode; and the last manifestation of the humane spirit was the decision of the Berlin Congress, that Roumania was to be independent only if it gave its citizens equal rights with one another regardless of religious belief.

Now began, slowly but surely, that terrible movement called anti-Semitism, the most fateful in the historic development of modern Judaism. The movement, it is true, has reached its highwater mark. Whatever one may say about it when considering

it from an historico-philosophic or from an economic standpoint, it is and remains that ancient agony, Jewbaiting, Jew-hatred, which has broken forth ever and again since the Crusades, and now assumes a different form in its manifestations on account of the different conditions of the time. Persecution of old was more clearly defined: the Jews were robbed, or killed, or forced to adopt Christianity. Naturally, in our times, the weapons of anti-Semitism are not rapine and murder; but in substituting other weapons, anti-Semitism becomes far more fearful and implacable. It investigates genealogies, even of Christians, and traces them back to some far distant time; it declares that a stain rests upon even the remotest posterity of intermarriage between Christians and Jewish converts to Christianity. A German historian put the matter very well when he said that a German who maintains ideas of this kind, does not take into consideration the fact that he lays upon his own ancestors the heavy guilt of having "tortured" certain faults into the Jewish character.

It is not my purpose, however, to refute the prejudices and ward off the attacks of anti-Semitism, but merely to consider in a few words the historic development of the movement within the last quarter of a century. Of course, the causes and grounds for anti-Semitism, its methods of warfare, and its aims, must be discussed at the same time; and the causes and grounds for another movement, called philo-Semitism, cannot be excluded from consideration. The origin of anti-Semitism dates as far back as 1875. Germany was then undergoing the throes of

an economic crisis, which was hastened by swindling schemes, by hazardous financial enterprises, and the like. On February 7, 1873, Eduard Lasker delivered his famous speech against these mischievous evils. Without doubt, the fight begun by Lasker originated in the noblest motives, the purest sentiments, and a courage rare in Germany at that time. On the other hand, it cannot be disputed that Lasker was not able to carry the purifying process he had undertaken to a conclusion; and from this fact developed the first germ of a new hostile movement. Its chief champion was Otto Glagau, who created a sensation at the time by his essays upon the manipulation of stocks and the dishonest formation of companies in Berlin. At the same time five famous articles appeared in the *Kreuzzeitung* of Berlin, the organ of *Junkerthum*, the party with whom hatred of the Jew was a deep-seated prejudice. The five articles were written upon the Bleichröder-Camphausen-Delbrück régime. The Catholic *Germania* called them "Articles upon the Jewish management of affairs in Prussia and Germany," and followed them up in its own numbers by a series of articles upon the Jews.

Without a doubt the movement was called into being after 1875 by the *Junkers* and clericals, and the assertion of the historian Treitschke is false, that he had seen the movement begin to grow a decade earlier. According to him, it would have dated from the latter half of the "sixties;" and this seems to rest upon an entirely unhistorical basis.

After Glagau had cleared the way, a varied array



of veteran liberals, Catholic priests, German judges, and Protestant court ministers, followed him to the battlefield armed with their screeds against the Jews. *Die goldene Internationale* ("The golden international") was the watchword of modern Jew-baiting, which ever assumed greater proportions. The wealth of Bleichröder, which was surely not due to Jewish influence, was the rallying cry of those who entertained the most violent hatred and envy of the Jews.

This animosity was fanned into flames from various sides. There were Catholic clergymen, like August Rohling, who came out against the Talmud and against the Jewish religion, and even dared dish up again the old fable of ritual murder. This was the religious aspect of anti-Semitism; besides, there was economic anti-Semitism, which was directed against manipulations on the stock exchange, against dishonest "promoting," and against the political influence of the Jews. Finally there developed the so-called philosophic hatred of the Jew. This had its root in the works of Schopenhauer; and with Eugen Dühring and his colleagues it may fairly be said to have reached the level of savage fanaticism.

Despite these various phases, the foundation of anti-Semitism in all its aspects was economic and social. This is proved by the turn taken by affairs in the following years. After the liberal economic policy came the agrarian policy, concerning itself with social conditions and questions of revenue. Liberalism was attacked, the religious and clerical

element came to the front, and the economic troubles of the young empire as well as the alarming accessions to the Social Democratic party sounded the warning to wide circles of people, that it was imperative to put up a new social and political program. This necessity, combined with conservative interests in Church and State, led to the foundation of the Christian Social Workingmen's Party. In the foreground of the new movement stood the court preacher Adolf Stöcker, who was the author of the fateful words: "All the evils of our economic life, . . . which have matured the noxious fruit of Social Democracy, are to be traced in the last resort to the Jews." This dictum made a deep and widespread impression. Attacks upon the Christian Socialists from the side of the liberals provoked violent opposition in turn. Judaism was supposed to lurk behind the mask of liberalism, and all acts of aggression against liberals were directed also against the Jews.

Anti-Semitism did not continue to be confined to the press and to workingmen's meetings. In 1880 it began to extend to the lecture rooms of the universities, and the students became the standard-bearers of the bitter persecution. It seemed good in the eyes of the persecutors to clothe their movement in the mantle of patriotism and the German national spirit. It was H. von Treitschke who uttered the fateful words: "The Jews are our misfortune." Treitschke was a high-minded man, of pure intentions, but one-sided and of passionate impulses, which blinded him to many phenomena in modern life. The

words scarcely uttered, the people seized upon them, and the opposition between Jewish and German ways became the battle-cry and watchword of the parties in the political strife. In the same year (1880), the Anti-Semitic League was founded at Berlin, and a petition to the Chancellor was circulated, which was called the first political step toward "the restraint of Jewish power." In March interpellations upon the Jewish question were introduced in the Prussian Chamber of Deputies and in the German Reichstag, on which occasions it became apparent how little the leaders of the various anti-Semitic factions were in accord with one another.

The petition, it is true, had no success; the Chancellor would not even receive it; but it became the point of departure for all endeavors whose object it was to limit or withdraw the political liberties of the Jews, which all of a sudden people were inclined to regard as a mistake.

In other countries than Germany, popular opinion in regard to the movement was at first rather skeptical; but soon the seed of the evil began to sprout on non-German soil as well. Even in America a society for the suppression of the Jewish race was founded, and its first article of faith was: "We reject the Ten Commandments given us by the Jew Moses, and we promise not to attend any church in which the name of Jesus Christ is mentioned."

The same year brought about the first attempts at self-defense on the part of the Jews. Three long, anxious years the Jews of Germany had borne all persecution and all attack, ever hoping and trusting

that it was only a passing storm. Not until 1880 did the conviction come upon them that they had a mighty and profound movement to deal with, the outcome of which was still incalculable. Professor Moritz Lazarus performed a service which, in my opinion, has not been sufficiently recognized. Two of his speeches and various confidential discussions had the effect of steadying the Jews by leading to the organization of their efforts at resistance. It must not be forgotten that at just this time the Crown Prince Frederick, later Emperor Frederick III, before the door of the new synagogue at Berlin, said to Magnus, city councillor, and at that time president of the Jewish community: "Anti-Semitism is the disgrace of our century." Despite many doubts to the contrary, it has been proved that the author of this sentence was actually the Emperor, who thus adequately characterized the movement in the eyes of all friends of progress and liberty.

In the following year the movement was carried over into Austria, where in the course of time it has assumed a threatening aspect. It is not too much to say that in Vienna the Jews are politically and socially outlawed. Here, the effects of the financial and economic crises, the conservative turn in politics, the self-assertion of the non-German portion of the nation, the unfortunate quarrel over language, radical Teutonism, the vacillating attitude of the liberal party, the growth of Social Democracy, and, finally, the rise of new ideas, practical as well as theoretic, regarding economic affairs—all this created indescribable excitement in

Austria, especially in Vienna. Yet, however wide the gaps existing between the various views and tendencies of Austrian politics, all parties are agreed on one point, on anti-Semitism; and singular accord reigns in this regard among the Catholic Ultramontanes, the Hussite Czechs, the Knights of the German Kaiserblume, and the Heralds of the Wotan Cult.

The saving doctrine of anti-Semitism now went the rounds of Europe. It reached Russia as an import from Germany; and there, in accordance with the degree of culture attained in this country, it led to those bloody excesses which began at Elizabethgrad in May, 1881, and for two years visited various parts of the empire like a plague. The history of the middle ages partially repeated itself. Hundreds of Jews fell a prey to the fury of the goaded mob, hundreds of thousands were thrown into misery and poverty, Jewish women and girls were violated, Jewish houses of worship were destroyed. In the following year began the first ritual murder trial, at Tisza-Eszlar in Hungary. Although it ended in the complete and honorable acquittal of the accused Jews, it was the commencement of a series of similar trials, which, it is to be feared, have not yet ended with those of Xanten, Konitz, and Polna. In so far as Hungary is concerned, the trial was a turning point for the better; not so in regard to other countries. On the contrary, anti-Semitism was only beginning to feel its power, and after 1886 the *Allgemeine deutsch-antisemitische Vereinigung* constituted the focus for the persecution of the Jews

in the German Empire. At the elections to the Reichstag in 1890, the anti-Semites secured five members. Stöcker, who had been discharged from his position as court preacher, opened up his campaign anew and with greater violence after the dismissal of Bismarck. On the other hand, the *Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus* was founded in Germany, and, in conjunction with the older body, the *Comité zur Abwehr antisemitischer Angriffe*, and the *Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens*, it has represented the interests of the Jews for more than a decade. The worst manifestation is the union of the Conservatives and the anti-Semites; and it is a distressing phenomenon that the Conservatives have not been disturbed in the least by the grotesqueness of the anti-Semitic leader Hermann Ahlwardt. Now people began "to get at the real kernel of anti-Semitism, to pick out what there was of truth and justice in it, to force the course of the mad current into a fixed channel, and so to make its strength useful in the life of the Germans." This was the task set the Conservatives for the immediate future.

Finally, anti-Semitism encroached upon France, too, where it made its first appearance, it is true, in the form of prejudice against the Germans. Now, in full flower and fanned into activity by the Dreyfus affair, it constitutes one of the saddest incidents in the history of modern culture.

The final aim of anti-Semitism is the complete separation of the Jewish from the German element.



The absurd master of ceremonies of the anti-Semitic party, Hermann Ahlwardt, himself betrayed the final aim of anti-Semitism, when in a people's meeting, where he was decorated with a crown of laurels, he availed himself of a quotation from a would-be liberal journal to say that the laurel wreath would not be entirely merited until the last Jew had boarded the last ship. And the anti-Semitism of the Berlin streets betrays the same final aim, when one of Ahlwardt's mob forces into the hands of Jewish passers-by tickets to Palestine with the return forbidden.

Anti-Semites lost no time in pointing to the exclusion of the Chinese from the United States and using it in all seriousness as an example which would gradually prepare the way in public opinion for sentiment in favor of the expulsion of the Jew. This radical, ranting anti-Semitism has seen its day. But far worse and more dangerous is the anti-Semitism of moderation. It does not wish to do away with the emancipation already granted the Jews; but, within the limits prescribed, it endeavors to keep Jews out of office and political life in general. It does not want Jewish judges to administer the oath to Christians, and it seeks to close the gates of the empire to Jewish new-comers. Unfortunately, this partial anti-Semitism is with us still in the new century, and the time cannot yet be seen when it will once more yield ground to the high power of humanity, to the sacred doctrine of universal love of man for man. But it is our firm hope, our steady goal for the new century, that some time

it will *have* to yield. We trust the German poet, who in the worst moments of the movement said with prophetic certainty: "The message from Judæa will conquer the hatred that exists between race and religion, so that posterity will smile at it as at an old historic legend."

## IV

In such gloomy days it was an important duty to encourage and console the disheartened hosts of Israel in all lands whither the plague of anti-Semitism had spread. Like a prophet on the watch-tower, scrutinizing the phenomena of his time, appeared Chayim Steinthal, the never-to-be-forgotten exhorter and comforter. He said to Israel: "‘Fear not, thou worm Jacob,’ so spake the Prophet of consolation in his early brief addresses delivered when the Jews of Babylonia thought they saw, thought they had seen, certain destruction before them. Defend thyself, O Jew. If there never was so unfortunate a people as thou art, yet there never was a people with so gentle a comforter as he who began, nay, who begins: ‘Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people.’ ‘Fear not, thou worm Jacob.’ Be proud in God, and in none but Him. What is pride in God? Humility. Let no idle words of what you are or are not confuse you. If their reproach strikes home, examine yourselves, and mend your ways; if not, proceed calmly in the old paths. If it strikes home, but you decide, after careful introspection, that it does not matter much, that on the contrary your conduct is good and proper, then persist. One thing, however, consider: We are surrounded by enemies, who spy out our weak points,

But Israel is a woman, and of women we are told that she is best of whom least is said. Well, then, be seen as little as possible, and do as much good as possible. Be not afraid for the terror of threatening night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day (frankly brutal anti-Semitism), nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness (hidden, more refined anti-Semitism), nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday (the apostasy of the faithless): God watcheth on high." Such exhortations and warnings were urgently needed, for discouragement had seized upon many circles. No sooner was there a slight abatement in the virulence of anti-Semitism than many took refuge in flight, not shrinking from the dishonor the world fastens upon the deserter on the eve of battle. However, the defection turned out to be less grave than at the time it threatened to become.

This explains why particularly the younger men, in despair over shattered ideals, were thrown into a state of excitement by the new catchword of Zionism cast into the maelstrom in 1896 by Theodore Herzl, a clever journalist. In my opinion Zionism is not a main current of Jewish history, but undeniably it has the importance of an underset accompanying the main current, as in the spring time a cold and a warm stream mingle in the rivers. Zionism is the expression of despair. It seeks the solution of the Jewish problem and the end of all confusion, not in the steady, victorious advances of humanity and liberty, but solely and alone in the restoration of Jewish nationality, that is, in self-liberation.

In Judaism all such questions must be dealt with from the religious point of view and in an historical spirit, not under the stress of passing needs and temporary phenomena. Israel is still what it always was, a religious brotherhood. Herein lies its peculiarity, its individuality. In remote antiquity Israel conceived its task to have been expressed in the prophet's admonition, to be "for a light to the Gentiles," and bring "salvation unto the end of the earth" (Isaiah 49:6). More than this, it is *par excellence* the historical task of Judaism to combat the tendency toward national particularism. Granted the brief premises here adduced, and there can logically be but the one conclusion: were Judaism to revive the national sentiment in its adherents, it would commit suicide. The lowest stage of religious development is the stage of a national religion, the highest the stage of a world-religion. We Jews having mounted from step to step, now being close to the desired goal of a world-religion, Zionism would have us return to the primitive stage of a national religion. If that is not self-destruction, then historical development is other than I take it to be. Since the overthrow of the Temple, Israel's vocation consists in influencing mankind spiritually, and hastening the Messianic age of reconciliation between nation and nation. Even in the middle ages the ideal of Judaism was the *Malchut Shaddai*, the kingdom of God on earth. For the realization of this ideal, the Jew prayed on the most sacred festivals of the year—he prayed that God unite the whole of mankind in the desire to accomplish the will of

God. From this point of view the history of the Diaspora is one of the most glorious portions of Jewish history, for during the long dispersion Judaism has demonstrated its indestructibility, and proved itself far more than a mere national formation.

The revival of Jewish consciousness coincided with efforts to colonize Palestine; but these two movements have nothing in common with each other. Indeed, it is beyond dispute that Zionism has inflicted considerable injury upon the idea of colonization, which before its advent had borne good fruit. In the cause of the colonization of Palestine all Jews can grow enthusiastic, but not all can endorse the Zionist movement, and so Palestine colonization must suffer through being identified with Zionism. Those of us who cannot accept the reading of history suggested by Zionist philosophy, continue to hope and work for the realization of the prophetic word that raises Israel's task high above all national barriers into the rare atmosphere of universal ideals: "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall the Lord be one and His name one."

But a little more and we shall have completed our journey through the nineteenth century. Before we take leave of it, let us pass in review all the various movements which, mingling with the last of the seven currents, fill out the frame of the period.

To the calmer vision of the historian who withdraws himself from the breathless bustle of daily life



and examines it, it would seem that Israel has passed its crisis successfully. A separation has come about between Jews and Jews. The dry leaves, the speckled fruit, have dropped from the tree. Those who have weathered the storm, and have emerged from its fury steadfast adherents of the Sinaitic faith, have attained to the tranquillity and exaltation of spirit that are a pledge for the future of Judaism. But, alas! it must be borne in mind that the fallen leaves were not all dry, not all withered. A glance at the great "valley of bones," to use the Prophet Ezekiel's figure, shows an astonishing array of strength and power of which we have been stripped by apostasy and baptism in the course of the nineteenth century—a wealth of intelligence and spiritual capital lost and lost irrevocably.

Statistics on the subject vary curiously. The missionaries put the number of Jews baptized in Europe in the last century at a hundred thousand; professional statisticians, whose interest in the subject is merely scientific, at twelve thousand. The former obviously exaggerate, the latter as obviously underestimate. Trustworthy results are out of the question, because no figures can be obtained for the Roman Catholic or the Greek Catholic Church, nor for freethinkers and dissidents of all kinds. Such figures as I can marshal here represent no more than a torso, though none the less interesting and significant for being a torso, for it is unfortunately a fact that apostasy in the nineteenth century occurred most frequently among the Jews of Germany, and the statistics of conversion to Protestantism are fairly accurate.

For the years between 1816 and 1843, 3273 cases of baptism of Jews are recorded, 121 annually, in a population of 160,000. To these Berlin contributed a large number, one hundred cases in the single year 1825. For the years 1844-1871 we have no figures, but the number could not have been less than two thousand, including 725 for Berlin alone. In the years 1872-1888 we have 2195, that is, an annual average of 129 in a population of three hundred thousand in round numbers, Berlin maintaining its unenviable pre-eminence. Between 1816 and 1888, 8300 Jews were baptized in the whole of Germany, Berlin claiming three thousand of the total number, and to these conversions to Protestantism we must probably add four thousand conversions to Catholicism.

It is interesting to note that in the period of anti-Jewish demonstrations, that is, the last quarter of the century, there was a perceptible diminution of the tendency toward apostasy and conversions. In the fourteen years from 1874 to 1887, the flood-tide of anti-Semitism, nineteen hundred Jews turned their backs on Judaism, 135 annually, fully one-half of them in Berlin.

The investigator of this class of phenomena must not neglect to take into account a peculiar modification. A special canon has been established: It ill becomes a Jew, the would-be renegade reasons, to change his faith; on the other hand, it is folly to bring up children in a faith that has long become indifferent to the parents, who fail to abandon it merely because they happen to have been born into

it. One's children, however, ought to be spared difficulties and the martyrdom involved in being a Jew. What will not parents do for their children?

The silliness and insincerity of such argumentation need no exposure. Is it better to do wrong than to suffer wrong? Is it proof of one's aristocracy to toady to a class of persons who now exclude Jews from their circles and admit them the instant they—utter a lie? Does society sanction the conduct of a man who, having suffered a wrong, makes no attempt to protest against it, but yields his ground, and slinks away like a coward, only to lead his children into the camp of those who wronged him? It is unjust to relieve one's children of the necessity of independent action, presumptuous to regulate their religion and their future autocratically. These are concerns to be left to their mature decision. Add to this pedagogic consideration the fact that the life of the baptized Jew has not been made particularly pleasant by anti-Semitism. Race-hatred pursues the "Jew descendants" unto the third and the fourth generation. Finally, if a father, to make life comfortable for his children, repudiates his own fathers because they were persecuted, how can character and a sense of honor be generated in the children, and when the children have attained to substance and rank in a state that continues to put a premium on apostasy, what shall prevent them from repudiating their aged father and mother in turn? The prophet has depicted such conditions: "The son dishonoreth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her

mother-in-law" (Micah 7:6). They who might have been united in soul and spirit are torn asunder and estranged by religion, the very factor that should have been the bond of union transcending all differences. The father of to-day must suffer the presence of the scoffer at his own table, must submit to the desecration of his sanctuary by members of his household whom he has reared to manhood and womanhood, those whom he supported with the sweat of his brow and the sacrifice of his blood, and established in a dignified position by his blessing. That is the fate many of our brethren have suffered in our days, the fate that is inflicting the most pitiful sorrow upon the best in Israel. We have seen children deny their dead fathers, abjure the old faith, and remove, as though it were a blemish and a stigma, the name that had been borne in honor, and this has happened to the proudest and best-known names in Israel, of good repute in all parts of the world. Then it is not astonishing to find many a one who harbors anger in his heart against his living father on account of the attachment and the affection he still feels for the old faith. He counts the days until the time of mourning for his father shall come, when all constraint will be put aside, and he may rend and cast off the weak bonds that link him to his people and their religion, and, assuming the new God and the new religion like a new garment, make his peace with the world, while he stands by his father's open grave. Such is the promise held out by the fashionable baptism of minor children. But no, the baptismal water trans-

forms no Jew into a German, so say the anti-Semites; and the certificate of baptism is not an admission ticket to European culture, so say all men of humane views.

There can be no objection to conversions from conviction. Every creed exacts and deserves respect. The Jew deems it presumptuous to speak in derogation of any religion and its ceremonies. Every religion is a sanctuary, to every religion the Scriptural sentence may be applied: "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for here is holy ground." Our anger and our scorn strike only those who are absolutely destitute of ethical feeling, and change their faith for materialistic reasons and from practical considerations. It is a sad fact, but one that must be set down in clear words, that the overwhelming majority of conversions in the nineteenth century can be traced to such ulterior motives. With frivolity that is downright frightful, faiths are changed to-day as one changes clothes. The levity of the converts is at last beginning to arouse anxiety in the clergy themselves, they who once rejoiced over the Jew-converts. For instance, the late chief court preacher at Berlin, Dr. Rudolf Kögel, a Protestant, relates in his "Reminiscences:" "With all signs of impatient haste, a Jewish banker entered my room: 'I wish to be baptized.'—'May I ask you to state your motives for the step?' I replied.—'Motives! Suffice it to say that I have given serious thought to the matter.' 'But as a clergyman I must be acquainted with the motives for your resolve; I have no desire to add one more to the number of

those who are Christians only in name ; as it is, there are more than enough of them.' 'Very well,' said the Jew, aggrieved, and rising from his seat, 'I shall apply to some other clergyman who takes his vocation less seriously.' " The reporter of this incident was an earnest and trustworthy man. Instances of such frivolity might be multiplied indefinitely. They have become the subject of popular wit: they tell of a clergyman in Berlin who advertises that he will perform baptisms painlessly with laughing gas.

Fifty years ago Abraham Geiger remonstrated with a Jew who was arranging for his own and his children's reception into the Church in this nonchalant way. "You are a business man," he said. "Suppose an honorable broker were to submit a lucrative business proposition to you. In spite of your confidence in him, would you not investigate the matter carefully? And that is only a question of money. Yet in a matter of conscience, in a question affecting your whole life, you would yield blind obedience to the clergyman-mediator?"

Christianity requires a sort of faith to which the Jew by birth finds it hard to subscribe. We cannot utter the faintest reproach against the Jew whose conscience permits him to pronounce the apostolic confession of faith. We can only express the hope that the new religion will grant him the happiness he apparently sought in vain in the old religion. But the Jew who frivolously and for frivolous reasons swears allegiance to the Christian faith, is a perjured rascal. At all times and among all nations perjury has justly been regarded as a most serious, a most



dishonoring crime. There can be nothing more shameless than the solemn invocation of God, the Almighty and All-Knowing, to witness the utterance of a word which for him who utters it contains a conscious lie. And how threadbare the reasons with which they gloss over their actions! They say there are Christians who pronounce the Christian confession of faith without believing in it. They choose to overlook the difference between the members of a community by birth, and the individual who distinctly takes measures to enter into the community. The first is part of it without a formal explanation of his relation to it. Within the community he has the right to urge his views, be they never so far removed from the prevailing views. With the recent convert it is quite otherwise. He must express his adherence to the prevailing views in order that the portals of the new religion shall be opened for him. He would enter with an unjustifiable lie, were he to make a lip-confession that finds no echo in his heart. He has no right to join a community with the intention of shaking the foundations of its faith.

Christianity itself is beginning to complain of the corroding, disintegrating influence of the neophytes—a corroboration from outside of the view of our sages, who warned Judaism against every form of missionary effort. “Proselytes,” they said, “are leprosy for Israel.”

We can ill afford, however, to concern ourselves with the conditions, the thought-currents, the cares that perplex other religious communities, seeing we have more than we can deal with in our own camp.

It lies with us to prevent our religion from becoming an object of barter to our children. We must see to it that they abandon the faith of their fathers neither from vanity, nor from the desire for a high social position and for titles, nor, worst of all, for the sake of material gain. By upright dealing with our fellow-men, by honorable conduct, by strength and purity of character, we must make ourselves exemplars for the younger generation. No opportunity should be allowed to pass by without emphasizing the Jew's capacity for development within the modern life. We must constantly reiterate for the benefit of our children what the modern poet says to his friends: "O, I understand well how for very pride the proud lion throws off his royal robe of fur, and disguises himself in the crocodile's iridescent, scaly coat of mail. It has grown fashionable to be a whining, sly, voracious crocodile. But if the lion hides his identity, what shall become of the lesser beasts? Take heed, Don Isaac, thou wert not created for the crocodile's element. Water—thou knowest whereof I speak—is thy misfortune, and thou wilt sink in it. Not in the water is thy realm. The slenderest trout can flourish in it better than the monarch of the forest."

For the rest, if discouragement seizes upon us when we observe the defection about us, we must resort to the prophet for consolation: "And if there be yet a tenth in it, and it return, and the holy spark be kindled in it, then, as the terebinth and the oak when they are felled put forth new shoots, a holy stock will keep within it its [Israel's] substance" (Isaiah 6: 13).

It is not going too far to say that in a measure the prophecy of Isaiah has been fulfilled. From out of the midst of troubles, aberrations, and confusion, there rose triumphant, in all parts of the globe, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the idea of the re-birth of Judaism. This is the last of the currents we shall have to consider to complete the history of the century.

What Prince Bismarck once called "practical Christianity" has its effective counterpart in the Jewish world. Self-knowledge has stimulated the Jewish communal conscience. The Jews the world over have come to recognize that centralization of force, concentration of effort, is imperative as an antidote to threatening decline. The recognition of this necessity lies at the root of a variety of endeavors, which present a pleasing vista of creative activity. Jewish communities everywhere, whether autonomous or under state control, are working zealously for the welfare and advancement of congregational life. The three great Alliances with their affiliated branches are safeguarding the interests of Jews in all parts of the world where they suffer as Jews. Unions of congregations reinforce the bond holding together the scattered members of the Jewish communion. Countless elementary and higher schools provide systematic instruction in the Jewish religion. Numerous associations are devoted to the cause of popular education, award stipends, and raise funds for libraries and schools. An equal number of associations aim to spread the knowledge of Jewish history and literature, and their efforts are

reaching ever-widening circles of interested members. Seminaries for rabbis and teachers replenish the ranks of our spiritual leaders. Besides all these there remain to be enumerated religious schools; conferences of rabbis and teachers; funds and associations for the benefit of communal officials; endowed institutes for the promotion of trades and agriculture among Jews; labor bureaus; secret orders for the intellectual and moral elevation of the Jewish community; institutions for the professional education and the betterment of the position of women; orphan asylums; homes for the aged and the infirm; hospitals and sanitariums, whose support entails a sacrifice of means and personal effort that is beyond praise; training schools for nurses, societies for temporary relief and against itinerant mendicancy, etc. All this the Jews have created out of nothing, as it were: governments did not aid them, with one exception they owe nothing to a great Mæcenas. The exception may not be passed over in silence. Baron Maurice de Hirsch's care of the persecuted Jew, by institutions and funds, in Argentine, in North America, in Russia, and in Galicia, must be classed with the greatest achievements in philanthropy in the nineteenth century. But the bulk of the newly-created charitable and educational institutions on both sides of the Atlantic have their origin in the self-denying generosity of the community as a whole. And the end of this development is not yet. Every day brings forth new plans and projects, new institutions and achievements. Everywhere there is life and movement; a thousand

forces are active in the interest of our communal welfare.

We may justly attach great hopes to this last of the spiritual currents which the nineteenth century has bequeathed to the twentieth. It presages a regeneration. With a wise recognition of the modern spirit it has directed all its force toward the social field, on which the final, titanic conflicts to be waged by mankind will reach their settlement.

To some it may seem not a little curious that so tiny a community as the Jewish community is, should have the courage to enter the lists for the great social combat impending. A glance at the appalling upheavals of our time might well suffice to rob the Jew of courage. What mighty forces are unchained, what demoniac powers are raging without cease! How many forms and materials, how many movements and currents, our time has gathered up into its bosom! How they will be poured into one mould, it remains for a dark future to show. The bonds of religious reverence have long been relaxed; the very forces of nature seem to be unbound, and from her eternal secrets the seven seals are about to drop. All the political problems that have ever perplexed mankind again affright the present generation, and will not be banished. To the calm of days within the memory of some still alive has succeeded a precipitate activity, a feverish unrest with no promise of quiet. The whirr of machinery, the snort of steam, the quiver of the electric wire passing through the very heart of the present, all combine to strike terror to our inmost

souls. And like an awful sphinx at the portals of the new century stands the hollow-eyed spectre of the social question, admonishing, cautioning, threatening . . . . .

What will be the end? The various epochs in the history of mankind show no synchronistic development. Therefore must we tremble. At any moment, no one knows when, the great decisions may be rendered which will give birth to the religion and the life principle of the future. This religion of the future shall not be born without our assistance. The Jews must be present. The future lies dark before us. No one can be certain that it will establish the reign of light. But in no circumstances can Israel's record be lost. It will remain clear until the end of time, for "Israel was the first to give articulate form to the people's cry of distress, the first to satisfy the complaints of the poor, the obstinate claims of all who panted after justice, the first to give the slave the opportunity of speech." Israel's program will be executed only when justice prevails in every spot on earth. And this answers the question about the future of Judaism and its mission.

The miracle of Israel's preservation during a period of three thousand years, throughout a sequence of at least a hundred generations, has never ceased to arouse the admiration of thoughtful men. A Catholic preacher of the last century in France on one occasion exclaimed ecstatically: "Build a tomb for the Jew, seal it with impermeable cement, surround it with sentinels, he will but mock



at you, and will emerge once more to prove that his race is of a spiritual substance which you do not possess, and that matter has no power over spirit." And a Protestant preacher in Germany says: "Israel as a whole has always been and still remains indestructible and invincible. It is more than a tangible object, more than a mortal person or nation; it is equal to an abstract concept, an immortal being. It may be abjectly despised of men and persecuted with virulence, but they cannot eradicate it." Both the Protestant and the Catholic, the German and the Frenchman, read the message aright, but of its fulfilment, seeing that they were orthodox Christians, they had no vision.

This mission of Israel is at the root of the whole matter. It is not too much to say that the belief in it is the base supporting the greater part of our literature, from the first verses of the Pentateuch to the last of the great orations of our prophets. They all are instinct with the spirit of the verse in Genesis: I have called him because "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment" (Gen. 18: 19). More than three thousand years have passed since the promise was given to Abraham, and, during that period, how often did Israel fail to perform his mission. But his defections did not hinder his great leaders from pointing to his mission again and again, and expressing the hope of great results to follow from its accomplishment. Defection is, indeed, not a new phenomenon with the Jew. Twenty-five hundred

years ago one of the greatest of the prophets put into vivid words the contrast between the ideal set before a people charged with a mission and the reality known to backsliding Israel:

Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see. Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I send? Who is blind as he that is at peace with me, and blind as the Lord's servant? Thou seest many things, but thou observest not; his ears are open, but he heareth not. It pleased the Lord, for his righteousness' sake, to magnify the law, and make it honorable. But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore . . . . Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? (Isaiah 42: 18-22; 24).

Here we have striking proof that Israel had attained to self-knowledge in early times. Apparently the conditions that called forth the prophet's admonishing words were not very different from those that prevail at present. The exponent of the God-idea is deaf to-day as he was then; of scorn a greater portion falls to his lot now than twenty-five hundred years ago. Neither obtuseness within nor contempt from without prevented the prophet from believing firmly in the future of his people. In inspired words he proclaimed their mission to them:

Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the nations. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment in truth.

He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law (Isaiah 42: 1-4).

According to this, as a brilliant historian aptly remarked, the apostle of the God-idea and of the moral law of Sinai is to be at once priest and sacrificial victim. Whenever, in gloomy days, a doubt assailed me, and I questioned whether our confidence was not misplaced, our hope vain, our martyrdom useless, the prophet's holy message always restored my faith in the future of Israel and in his historic mission. Here is the perspective the prophet discloses to our mind's eye:

Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye peoples, from far: the Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name; and he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me; and he hath made me a polished shaft, in his quiver hath he kept me close: and he said unto me, Thou art my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified. But I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and vanity: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my recompense with my God. And now saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, and that Israel be gathered unto him: (for I am honorable in the eyes of the Lord, and my God is become my strength:) yea, he saith, It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the nations, that thou mayest be my salvation (Isaiah 49: 1-6).

In sublimer, in holier terms the future of Israel cannot be thought. So long as religions will exist,

Judaism shall exist; and when, at the end of many days, the great hope of all poets and prophets will be fulfilled, and all religions will be united in one, then—this must be our firm, unshakable hope—this one religion will be the religion of the Jew, purged of all dross and externalities. This hope that I am expressing is not personal or particularistic. The greatest thinkers of modern times, the most eminent investigators in the field of comparative religions, have given eloquent expression to the same view. Ernest Renan says: "The true founders of Christianity are those great prophets who proclaimed a pure religion, divested of all crass forms, living in the heart and mind of its professors, a religion, then, which may and should belong to all mankind alike, an ideal religion, consisting in the promulgation of God's kingdom on earth and in the hope of an era of justice for wretched man . . . . . The glory of Christianity is the glory of Judaism. The world became Jewish in the measure in which it was converted to the laws of mildness and humanity inculcated by the disciples of Jesus. And now, seeing that these great things have been accomplished, we may say with confidence: Judaism, which served us so well in the past, will serve us equally well in the future. It will promote the cause of truth, the cause of progress, and of the modern spirit . . . . . The founders of the liberal dogma in religion, I repeat, are your old prophets, Isaiah, the authors of the Sibylline books, the Jewish school of Alexandria, the early Christians, the successors of the prophets—they are the genuine originators of the

spirit of justice in the world. In one word, the pure religion which we dream of as the bond that shall in days to come hold together the whole of mankind in one communion, will be the realization of the religion of Isaiah, the ideal Jewish religion, freed from all admixture of impurity."

It were beside the mark to believe such views the peculiar property of Catholic freethinkers. Professor Berner, a consistent Protestant, and at the same time a prominent German jurist, says in a lecture on the future of Israel held before the German Society of Protestants: "Down to the present time the Jews have been the pioneers of monotheism. They have always cherished monotheism faithfully, for this service let them continue to be what they are. The renegades who are coming to us from them have no value for us religiously or morally. Every case of apostasy from Judaism is to be looked upon as detrimental to the development of religion to the highest degree of purity and truth. Judaism in its religious separateness has done humanity the greatest service. The religion of the future will be a Christianity from which all dogmatic padding and polytheistic alloy will have been removed, and which will be refined into pure monotheism by the renewed intervention of Judaism."

Such witnesses may well give support to our hope. Paradoxical as it may seem, the exalted ideas that form the original sources of Judaism have not yet been fully realized. In ancient days monotheism could not take root, and later the rise of Christianity



forced the leaders of Judaism to build a fence about the law. The Arabic-Aristotelian philosophy purged away some of the dross, but at the same time burdened Judaism with alien elements. Then came the Cabbala with its twilight of fantastic mysticism. Oppression and isolation paralyzed the tendency toward universalism. In short, Judaism in successive ages lacked the light, the great free spaces, which are indispensable for a full, symmetric unfolding of all forces and ideas. The Jewish race has never been placed in the position in which it could develop unhampered all its innate capabilities while its faults were polished away, and the contrasting forces that impel it were welded into a complete unity. In spite of such adverse fortunes this race is without a doubt called upon to play an important part in the great, final decisions between races and nations with which the new century is big. That is the opinion of a famous ethnographer who describes the Jewish race with the following happy antitheses: A race which is able to live scattered on the five continents, under all skies, among all peoples; which is equipped with the most remarkable talents, wonderfully blended with each other: with a woman's heart and a man's intellect, a lively fancy and an acute mind, unlimited receptivity, alert appreciation for what is new and strange, and practical discernment, wit, and earnestness, ardor and stability, enthusiasm and discretion, pathos and sobriety, pliability and defiance, subjectivity and capacity for devotion, pride and humility, the generosity of a gentleman and the frugality of a day-



laborer, the firmness of the rock and the fluidity of water, the resistance of steel and the malleability of gold; which unites in itself Semitic, Hamitic, and Japhetic elements; which has produced an endless line of lawgivers, prophets, psalmists, gnomic poets, jurists, casuists, philosophers, physicians, statesmen, publicists, political economists, musicians, philologists, historians, merchants, bankers, manufacturers—such a race, when once it attains to a position of peace and security, in which it may freely unfold its powers, smooth down the asperities of its mental make-up, and give its mind the severe discipline of systematic thought,—such a race is able to climb to the highest round of the ladder of human development, for it is the designated mediator between two worlds, the world of the Orient and of the Occident, whose harmonization is a task for the future to accomplish. When this harmonization has been effected, only then will the Jewish race have fulfilled its mission.

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